

**SASKATCHEWAN WESTERN DEVELOPMENT MUSEUM:
STRATEGIC PLAN (2007 – 2012)**

SUMMARY

Revision date: 12 March 2008
Approved 4 April 2008

Summary

Approved 4 April 2008

INDEX

Mandate	2
Mission	3
Organizational values	3
Strategic challenges	3
Priority goals: 2007 - 2009	5
Long-term goals: 2009- 2012	8

Mandate (Revised Statutes of Saskatchewan, 1978)

The Western Development Museum Act (Section 11) specifies that the Board shall endeavour:

- a) to procure by gift, donation, devise, bequest or loan wherever possible, and by purchase where necessary and desirable, tools, machinery, implements, engines, devices and other goods and chattels of historical value and importance connected with the economic and cultural development of western Canada;
- b) to collect, arrange, catalogue, recondition, preserve and exhibit to the public, the tools, machinery, implements, engines, devices and other goods and chattels referred to in clause (a);
- c) to stimulate interest in the history of the economic and cultural development of western Canada;
- d) to co-operate with organizations having similar objects.

The WDM's Board of Directors noted that this mandate is broad enough to encompass the aims and aspirations of a new strategic plan.

Mission

The Western Development Museum is the keeper of Saskatchewan's collective heritage. The Museum shares the province's unique sense of place with all people for

Summary

Approved 4 April 2008

their understanding and enjoyment – recognizing that the legacy of the past is the foundation for a sustainable future.

Organizational Values

- § Teamwork and Communication
- § Trust and Respect
- § Freedom with Accountability
- § Loyalty and Commitment
- § Honesty and Integrity
- § Initiative and Creativity

Strategic Challenges

These strategic challenges are synonymous with directions for future work, and are issues that affect the WDM's mandate, mission, programs, services, audience, users, structure, processes, management and financing. Strategic challenges are also challenges to change the status quo. The following strategic challenges are not listed in order of priority:

Strategic Challenge #1 – The Visitor Experience

The overall visitor experience at all of the Branches is tired, predictable and in need of renewal. There is a public perception that there is no need to visit the WDM often, as there is little change other than the special events. This is not entirely accurate, however, as work is ongoing to refurbish and upgrade the in-house exhibits at various Branches. There has been a decline in exhibit and building maintenance which also reinforces this negative impression. The notable exception to this is the work that has been completed on the WTPG at each of the Branches. This project has been underway for more than a decade, and it has been the most significant challenge confronting WDM. Now that sufficient funding has been secured to finish these exhibits, the construction work can proceed to completion. In general, it should also be noted that the WDM suffers from various stereotypical images, such as being the “tractor museum.”

In summary, the visitor experience is the means to achieve the WDM's mission and goals. A thoughtful and effective visitor experience allows visitors' needs and interests to influence the direction of the museum's work. The visitor experience is also a multifaceted topic, and includes not only the WDM's programs and services at all its sites, but also an understanding of who the audience is, what unique brand image the WDM wishes to convey, and the most cost effective marketing to achieve this differentiation.

Strategic Challenge #2 – Collections Management

Summary

Approved 4 April 2008

The WDM is artifact rich and has assembled a collection of agricultural, domestic and business-related artifacts that are unique in Canada. Museum collections, by their very nature, will expand indefinitely and this continuous growth is now the key factor in a looming crisis. There is a lack of storage space, conservation services are in short supply, and cataloguing is not keeping pace with the acquisitions. At the same time, the WDM has not kept pace with collecting in other areas of provincial relevance, such as mining, science, technology and post-1949 agricultural technology.

It is clearly impossible to continue to expand both the size and subject areas of the collections. In a materialistic society such as ours, there will always be a far greater number of objects to acquire than can be adequately housed. As a result, it is essential to continue to refine and build the collection selectively, while maximizing public accessibility. This requires a comprehensive collections management plan and strategies, in order to improve the condition, utility and security of the collections.

Strategic Challenge #3 - Assured/Sustained Funding

Much remains to be done to increase and diversify the WDM's funding, including the provincial allocation, earned revenues, grants and fundraising. There is no doubt that the WDM's Development Department requires additional resources to enhance its effectiveness.

The WDM currently generates about 15% to 20% of its annual budget through earned revenues, with the Saskatoon Branch contributing the bulk of these revenues through a variety of entrepreneurial activities. The Saskatoon Branch is unable to expand their earned revenues without a significant investment in enhanced facilities, while the other Branches have unexplored and untapped potential to increase their earned revenues, albeit at a much more modest level. It takes money to make money, not to mention the staff resources required for planning and management. Increasing earned revenues is, therefore, a long-term goal (2009-2012), in light of the need to complete the WTPG, enhance the visitor experience and raise the WDM's community profile.

Strategic Challenge #4 – Facilities

Directly related to the last five years of budgetary restraint has been the corresponding decline in the WDM's physical infrastructure. This is a significant issue, recognizing that the WDM has an immense physical plant consisting of five large and separate facilities totalling 500,000 square feet of enclosed space. The unsatisfactory condition of various WDM facilities impinges on all aspects of the operations, including the visitor experience, visitor safety and the care of collections. Key priorities will have to be identified, especially those that are required to ensure public safety and enhance the visitor experience.

Summary

Approved 4 April 2008

Strategic Challenge #5 – Partnerships

More needs to be done to foster collaboration and cooperation, most notably with Saskatchewan's First Nations. Although the WDM will never become a First Nations museum, there is much to be done to give First Nations suitable recognition for their role in the development of the province.

Priority Goals: 2007-2009

Goal #1 – Complete the “Winning the Prairie Gamble” exhibition within the projected funding resources, in a manner that is pragmatic and recognizes the importance of construction time-line adherence, and with a promotional approach that establishes these exhibits as a focal point of attraction for the WDM.

Goal #2 – Improve the quality of the visitor experience with dynamic exhibitions, programs and services that foster a sense of place, enhance community well-being, celebrate diversity and promote provincial pride.

Goal #3 - Develop working relationships and alliances with community organizations to enhance the WDM's profile and effectiveness as a socially responsible museum.

Goal #4 – Reduce the WDM's Ecological Footprint and operating costs with energy conservation initiatives and sustainability strategies, such as using environmentally-friendly products, solar lighting and wind power, and become a provincial demonstration site to showcase energy efficiency.¹

Strategies for Priority Goals: 2007-2009

Goal #1 – Complete the “Winning the Prairie Gamble” exhibition by September 2009, within the projected funding resources, and in a manner that is pragmatic and recognizes the importance of construction time-line adherence, and with a promotional approach that establishes these exhibits as a focal point of attraction for the WDM.

Strategies (Listed in order of priority for Goal #1 only):

1. Complete “Winning the Prairie Gamble” as currently planned.

Key Results:

¹ The Ecological Footprint is a measure of the “load” imposed by a given population on nature. It represents the land (and water) area required to sustain current levels of resource consumption and waste discharge by that population indefinitely. See M. Wackernagel and W. Rees. (1996). *Our Ecological Footprint: Reducing Human Impact on Earth*. Gabriola Island, B.C., Canada: New Society Publishers.

Summary

Approved 4 April 2008

Identifying key results is essential, as they will indicate if the goals are being achieved. It should be noted that several of these key results will require monitoring and evaluation techniques not currently used at the WDM.

1. Separate public openings of “Winning the Prairie Gamble” at each Branch, staged in succession to ensure maximum public exposure.
2. Increased attendance at all Branches.
3. Quantifiable increase in visitor satisfaction as indicated by visitor satisfaction surveys (the quality and quantity of visitor comments).
4. Increased public awareness of WDM as indicated by media coverage.

Goal # 2 – Improve the quality of the visitor experience with dynamic exhibitions, programs and services that foster a sense of place, enhance community well-being, celebrate diversity and promote provincial pride.

Strategies:

1. Enhance the visitor experience by animating the exhibits and programs through the use of interpreters, actors, story tellers, drama, music, dance and live demonstrations at all four Branches.
2. Upgrade the look and content of existing exhibits. This could be as basic as rotating cars and other significant artifacts on a regular basis and showcasing new acquisitions, including artifact exchanges among the Branches.
3. Develop a facilities rental policy.
4. Develop and refresh the WDM’s facilities and equipment to improve public safety, staff safety, the safety of the collections and the quality of the visitor experience.
5. Develop an environmentally-controlled exhibit gallery in each Branch with adequate security, to allow the WDM to host a wide range of high quality travelling and in-house exhibits.

Key Results:

1. Increased attendance at all Branches.

Summary

Approved 4 April 2008

2. Quantifiable increase in visitor satisfaction as indicated by visitor satisfaction surveys (the quality and quantity of visitor comments), including the diversification of the audience (age, ethnicity and income levels).
 3. Increased donations, including private, corporate and foundation contributions.
 4. Increased membership in all categories.
 5. Completion of high profile physical improvements at each Branch, as identified in the annual building inspection.
 6. Completion of a facilities rental policy.
 7. Completion of a facilities security assessment and security policy.
-

Goal #3 - Develop working relationships and partnerships with community organizations to enhance the WDM's profile and effectiveness as a socially responsible museum.

Strategies:

1. Establish Community Involvement Groups (CIGs) at each Branch to identify and develop partnerships with key community organizations to address community issues and interests, such as youth involvement (Grades 9-12).
2. Create a staff liaison position for an aboriginal person to work with First Nations and Métis groups on behalf of the WDM, in an effort to identify community needs and aspirations and determine how the WDM could assist. This strategy could also include the hosting of a First Nations art and craft fair at the WDM, and the creation of exhibition space where First Nations and other community groups could present their own stories. Representatives of these groups could also be employed to assist with the interpretation of WDM exhibits.
3. Enhance community involvement in the governance of WDM by expanding the selection of Board members beyond provincial Order-in-Council appointments. Potential Board appointments could include the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN), the University of Saskatchewan, social agencies, various provincial crown corporations and the business community.

Key Results:

1. Community Involvement Groups established and working at each Branch, including the identification of priority projects with work plans.

Summary

Approved 4 April 2008

2. Completion of the terms of reference, consultation process and protocol for First Nations involvement.
 3. Completion of a work plan and critical path for expanding representation on WDM's Board of Directors.
-

Goal #4 – Reduce the WDM's Ecological Footprint and operating costs with energy conservation initiatives and sustainability strategies, such as using environmentally-friendly products, solar lighting and wind power, and become a provincial demonstration site to showcase energy efficiency.

Strategies:

1. Consult with Saskatchewan's research and development community to enhance public understanding of environmental sustainability, and provide collections and stories that serve as antecedents for contemporary environmental technologies.
2. Identify and secure funding and technology partnerships (community, government, corporate, foundation and private) to support sustainability initiatives at the WDM.
3. Develop and implement a plan to reduce all forms of energy and material consumption at the WDM.

Key Results:

1. Completion of an energy audit to determine current energy consumption at all Branches and the Curatorial Centre.
 2. Completion of an environmental sustainability policy to ensure a high level of environmental responsibility in the WDM's internal operations.
 3. Completion of one energy conservation project or sustainability strategy, such as completing the installation of the HVAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning) fan speed controls in all facilities.
-

Long-Term Goals: 2009-2012

Goal # 1 - Refine and build the collection, while maximizing its public accessibility and improving its condition, utility and security in accordance with professional standards.

Summary

Approved 4 April 2008

Goal # 2 - Stabilize and diversify the revenue base to enhance self-sufficiency and long-term sustainability.

Strategies for Long-Term Goals: 2009-2012

Goal # 1 - Refine and build the collection, while maximizing its public accessibility and improving its condition, utility and security in accordance with professional standards.

Strategies:

1. Review and update the collections management policy, including a collections plan with criteria for collecting and refining the collections through grading and deaccessioning. The development of this policy must include the Branches, all collecting areas, conservation and the library/photographic collections. The Extension Collection must also be addressed in this policy, with particular reference to its care, use and future development, as this collection is essential in enriching the visitor experience.
2. Construct additional collection storage at one or more of the Branches which could be accessible to the public and thereby enhance the visitor experience.

Key Results:

1. Backlog of uncatalogued objects eliminated.
2. Increased public access to collection information and images using computerized kiosks.
3. Quantifiable decrease in artifact and exhibit damage.
4. Increased collection storage capacity (new, old or renovated).
5. Ability to borrow national travelling exhibits by meeting the mandatory security and environmental standards.
6. Completion of an up-to-date collections management policy.

Goal # 2 - Stabilize and diversify the revenue base to enhance self-sufficiency and long-term sustainability.

Strategy:

Summary

Approved 4 April 2008

1. Expand earned revenue sources and establish revenue targets.

Key Results:

1. Identification of one new earned revenue source at each Branch and the Curatorial Centre in 2009-2010, and an overall 5% increase in earned revenues by 2011-2012.

END